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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Richard Paul Baumann, age 43, originally of Ohio, was sentenced today on charges of conspiracy to unlawfully use the identification of others with the intent to commit mail fraud. United States District Court Judge James R. Spencer sentenced Baumann to 51 months incarceration and ordered him to pay \$103,921.19 in restitution.

Baumann, who pled guilty on July 7, 2004, with the assistance of others, took the names and personal information of ten victims, mostly from Virginia, and procured false identification documents under those identities. Baumann then used those documents to obtain credit in the victims' names and purchased merchandise at various retail outlets throughout the Mid-Atlantic. Much of the merchandise, with a retail value in excess of \$85,578.00, was then sold to the public via the internet on such online sites as eBay.

Mr. McNulty stated: "We are all vulnerable to identity theft. Once victimized, it is a nightmare to rectify. Baumann received severe but just punishment for crimes that wrecked havoc in the lives of innocent victims."

Also announcing the plea are Virginia Attorney General Jerry W. Kilgore; Steven C. Woodard, Special Agent-In-Charge, Secret Service, Richmond Field Office; Sheriff J.D. Diggs, York County Sheriff's Office; and Sheriff Samuel H. Shands, Dinwiddie County Sheriff's Office.

Attorney General Kilgore noted, "Identity theft threatens citizens and businesses in our country, and is currently the fastest growing crime in the nation. This case should send the message to anyone involved in such crimes that if you take someone else's identification and attempt to use it for criminal purposes you will be caught and you will be prosecuted to the fullest extent for the law. This case should also further remind Virginians of the importance of protecting your personal information and making sure that others cannot access it and thus use it for their own illegal purposes. I also want to remind Virginians that if they are victims of identity theft, our office issues Identity Theft Passports designed to protect innocent citizens from any criminal repercussions because someone else stole their identity. Many creditors also recognize the passport as well."

(more)

This case was investigated by the York County, Virginia Sheriff's Office, Dinwiddie County, Virginia Sheriff's Office and the United States Secret Service, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David T. Maguire, and Special Assistant United States Attorney and Senior Assistant Virginia Attorney General Martin L. Kent.